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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7613th meeting

Thursday, 28 January 2016, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Bermúdez	(Uruguay)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Faye
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2016/11)

Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2016/15)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2016/11)

Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2016/15)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/82, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Angola, France, Japan, New Zealand, Spain, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to documents S/2016/11 and S/2016/15, which contain the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus and the report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus, respectively.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I should like to inform the Council that the presidency of the Council has met with the representatives of the parties, who have confirmed that they maintain their well-known positions vis-à-vis the item on the Council's agenda. On the basis of those meetings, with the consent of the members of the Council, the presidency has drawn the conclusion that the Council can proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution before it.

If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2263 (2016).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the vote.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2263 (2016), on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, out of our conviction that the Force is carrying out an important role in supporting stability in Cyprus, particularly in the light of the positive momentum observed in the negotiating process between both Cypriot parties and based on what both parties have expressed with respect to their complete commitment to reaching a comprehensive and sustainable settlement for the Cypriot issue as quickly as possible.

Notwithstanding that, Egypt is convinced that it was important that the thirteenth preambular paragraph of the resolution, indicating the nature and identity of the military bases in the north of Cyprus, be included in order to reflect the reality on the ground. In addition, when dealing with the issue of missing persons, a humanitarian issue of primary importance, it is necessary that all the parties take up their responsibilities in the matter.

Since Egypt stresses the importance of exerting every effort to make the political process succeed, we reiterate that all parties must act responsibly during the negotiations and abstain from any acts that could lead to increased tension or disrupt the positive environment that prevails at present. In that context, Egypt reiterates that the Cypriot settlement must abide by the relevant Security Council resolutions and the current regional political conditions.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation voted in favour of resolution 2263 (2016), on extending the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, which plays an important role in the maintenance of peace and tranquillity on the island. We are in favour of intercommunity relations and negotiations.

However, we note that the document is seriously flawed because the sponsors of the resolution did not heed the opinions of a number of Security Council members, failing to reflect in the text an obvious fact, namely, that beyond the presence in Cyprus

of the two Cypriot communities, there is also one additional player — Turkey — which maintains an enormous military presence on the island and whose true relationship with the settlement of the Cyprus issue is still not clear. This is attested to, for example, by the fact that the Turkish air force regularly violates Cypriot air space. We are convinced that such actions have a negative impact on the atmosphere in which the negotiations are taking place, harm civil aviation in the region and should be curtailed.

We are in favour of the Cypriot parties finding a negotiated solution that is in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of the Security Council resolutions and which would respond to contemporary geopolitical realities. In that context, we note that the existing security mechanisms, namely, systems of external guarantees for Cyprus, are a relic of the colonial era and have no place in the twenty-first century.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom warmly welcomes the renewal of the mandate for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) through resolution 2263 (2016), unanimously adopted today. As the penholder on this issue, and as one of the largest contributors to UNFICYP, we are pleased that the mission has been extended for another six months. We thank colleagues for their roles in bringing our negotiations to a successful conclusion.

This adoption sends a positive message at a hopeful time for Cyprus. Through resolution 2263 (2016), we have done three main things. First, we have welcomed the progress and the positive momentum in the leaders-led settlement negotiations. Secondly, we have captured the positive developments since the last mandate renewal, including on confidence-building measures. And, thirdly, we have authorized a modest uplift in UNFICYP's force levels to assist the mission in its planning for the hopeful event of a settlement in the near future.

As penholder, the United Kingdom recognizes that there were sensitivities, as evidenced by my Russian colleague's statement. Our efforts during the drafting focused on striking a fine balance on emotive issues, and we believe that the resolution, unanimously adopted, achieved that balance — a balance that allows everyone be sure that no party felt undermined. It draws on language from the Secretary-General's UNFICYP report (S/2016/11). The resolution also has the support of the parties themselves, and we are very glad to note that a significant number of other Council members co-sponsored it.

Finally, there is positive momentum ongoing in the leaders-led settlement negotiations. The Council now needs to assist those leaders to reach agreement. The road ahead will be tough, and the leaders will need to show continued courage to take difficult decisions. In doing so, they will have the full support of the United Kingdom, which is something British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond made clear during his visit last November. But the support of the whole Council will also be vital in making this prospect of a settlement a reality. We have a real opportunity ahead to bring this long-running issue to an overdue conclusion. And let us help the leaders to seize that opportunity.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): The United States fully supports the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. We commend both Cypriot leaders for their determination to make substantial progress towards a comprehensive settlement to end the long-standing division of the island and reunify Cyprus as a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

As the Secretary of State of the United States, Secretary Kerry, recently said at the World Economic Forum, we are committed to supporting "the best chance in decades to achieve a Cyprus settlement". The United States is optimistic that a settlement agreement can be achieved, but we know that this will require the continued persistence of the two leaders, as well as support from the international community, including the Security Council.

It is unfortunate that the remarks of a member of the Council have attempted to politicize this consensus adoption. We urge all Council members to engage on Cyprus free of ulterior political motives driven by external factors, and in the best interest of the Cypriot people.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.